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By JOHN KEPLINGER

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Sovier agent?

CPYRGHT

Lee Harvey Oswald suddenly was not acting on orders of the mental direction. Foreigners are letters from Minst in which he found himself in truly strange Kremlin wher, he allegedly fired not allowed to join them. There- son dropped siy, anti-Soviet hints and foreign surroundings. From the shots that killed Kennedy. fore, Oswald either was a mem and made mention of a desire to the giant metropolis of Moscow, In Minsk, Smith says, Soviet ber of a Soviet outfit or, more return home. This represented

Smith is convinced

he had been hastily removed to military intelligence had a highlikely, a special arrangement a sudden and uncharacteristic the small, bleak city of Minsk in job ahead: "... to obtain every was made for him so he could change of heart, Smith believes, the winter of 1959.

The had come a long way since (Oswald), not merely on electory of the control of t

that day in Los Angeles two tronics and call signs (Oswald dragged on into the spring of station of an alleged sheet metal months earlier when his pass-had been a radio technician) 1960, Smith estimates. When it worker, for he met and began port application to travel abroad but also on Marine Corps pro-finally ended, intelligence offi-courting Marina Nikolayevna was approved. cedures . . .

He had made his way to Russ "An interrogation goo of sev-how best to utilize him.

sia meeking Soviet citizensnip in eral months faced Soviet intelli- Did Oswald have agent poten-

none and Central Intelligence tion period. t Agency, Oswald was at this juncture in the hands of Soviet mili- Continuing with his analysis of tary intelligence agents.

cow and was the first full-time. "We are told that while in Smith acknowledges, because it "Furthermore, the intelligence Smith, who has lived in Mos-Minsk, Smith says: State Department security of Minsk Oswald joined a rifle club ficer of the American Embassy and practiced marksmanship. there, has traced Oswald's odys-Now, there are no rifle clubs in sey from the time he obtained a the Soviet Union. Unless one bepassport in Los Angeles untillongs to a hunter's "Sovkhoz" the day four years later when (for professional hunters), a So-

naked where the political way of gence, especially if Oswald had like conformed with his own disbeen alert and had used his the course of events since himself for this sort of interro
Marine Corps tour to prepare believes.

As for reports Oswald was giv-Smith believes. As for reports Oswald was give Smith believes.

SCOTET AGENTS

In a low-paying (80 ruble or \$88 Still hungering for Soviet cities the implies the Russians would be epinion of Edward Ella mouth) sheet metal worker's zenship, Oswald managed to not tock kindly on an American

RIFLE CLUB

President John F. Kennedy was viet citizen is allowed to pracassassinated in Dallas. tice shooting only within the "snafu." framework of the All-Union Vol. Despite this jolt, Soviet intelli- Smith asserts.

ing program.

tional guard and reserve train-following events:

Ine point is this:

cials, probably began debating Prusakova, reportedly the nicce

Mile waiting for a uccision of married the attractive, and Cotober had undergone a did change. His hoped-for citithat a Soviet intelligence intergrew impatient, a trait that was a compared to an out-of-the-way adds.

White waiting for a uccision of married the attractive, and old Marina.

These latter two acts are compared to an out-of-the-way adds.

imith of Palo Alto, a former job in Minsk, Smith is skeptical write a letter to the Marine location supposedly intent on U.S. security-intelligence officer He believes the job was simply Corps asking that he be distreducing with a Russian wife. the Army, State Depart-a "cover" during the interrogation charged as a reservist so he "The logical interpretation," could accept Soviet citizenship. (The Marines complied with an Smith continues, "is that by this unsatisfactory discharge.)

> Oswald's reported stay in letter passed Soviet censorship, mission was to be. could have damaged Oswald's operators had decided to estab-'agent potential."

untary Society for Cooperation gence decided to take Oswald In subsequent level with the Army, Air Force and into the fold, Smith is con-mother, Oswald respectively.

of a Soviet intelligence colonel.

-In February, 1961, Oswald

ltime a firm decision had been It is almost incredible that the made as to what (Oswald's)

lish 'control' through a Russian There could have been some wife who would leave hostages Smith's assessment that it got discipline and suitable for trainthrough censorship as the re- ing, and who could be used as sult of some inexplicable Oswald's assistant an one other things, for communications,'

In subsequent letter Navy—a sort of combination na- vinced. As evidence, he cites the cial aid to return home. letter written about December. 1961. Oswald announced by and his family would receive each visas in February and be home about March, 1962

## CPYRGHT

It is interesting, Smith believes, that Oswald knew two months in advance when the exit visas would be granted. He states "there is no precedent for the Soviets providing such advance notice."

## ASSIGNMENT

"Indeed, what would be their purpose?" he asks. "If a visa had been promised some time in December for mid-February, an assignment was involved which Oswald was to complete before leaving," Smith argues.

"No, (the assignment) was hardly a matter of sheet metal working. This precise predating would make much sense, however, if it was anticipated that Oswald would be completing a course of instruction preparing for his return to the United States as an agent."

Smith offers one further bit of evidence which he believes lends credence to the theory Oswald was trained as a Soviet agent:

In January, 1962, while still in Minsk, Oswald wrote two more letters. One was to Sen. John Tower of Texas, a conservative Republican, beseeching help for his return home, and the other was to Secretary of the Navy John Connaily askin reconsideration of his unsatisfactory discharge from the Marines.

Says Smith with a touch of cynicism:

"An American defector living in Minsk would in deadly peril contact the U.S. Navy and a conservative U.S. senator. He would have been immediately accused of attempted espionage against the Soviet Union.

"Had these letters not been leared beforehand with Soviet security authorities, he would lave been promptly arrested!" Thus, the ground was laid for Dswald's return home.

(Next: the significance of his marriage)

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